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Clayton Schenck
Legislative Fiscal Analyst
Room 110 Capitol Building
P.O. Box 201711
Helena, MT 59620-1711

Dear Mr. Schenck:

Thank you for your recent request for an update to Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) initiative to assume operational control of our Automated Licensing System (ALS). This letter is intended to provide a high-level overview of the status of that transition. Attached you will find an updated copy of the transition plan provided to the Natural Resources and Commerce Appropriations Subcommittee regarding this project with items "checked off" as completed. The plan will look slightly different as it has evolved through use since the session as well as some reorganization.

What is happening on the project and how is it going ?

Currently, FWP feels the transition is progressing well and relatively close to envisioned schedules.

What are the results so far?

The following items have been accomplished to date:

- Ten (10) of the 16 positions have been filled with individuals focusing on FWP business in general, ALS, and learning the ultimate responsibilities of their position.
- Six (6) remaining positions are in various stages of recruitment, including a conscious decision to manage the required vacancy savings.
- Contracts designed to augment staff, not authorized by the legislature, are in place.

- The contract amendment to provide continuity in “data communications” is currently being negotiated with MCI and will be completed prior to the original contract’s end in March 2006.
- Office space, supplies, and infrastructure for all positions have been arranged.
- A transition plan specific to MCI responsibility areas has been completed (also attached) with execution underway to ensure appropriate transition of contractor activities and knowledge.
- Comprehensive review of software and documentation has occurred to ensure that FWP currently holds all necessary “pieces” of the system to allow full assumption of control.
- Weekly phone conferences related to the transitional effort with MCI and ITSD are occurring.

What challenges have arisen?

The largest challenge posed so far has been recruitment of qualified “programming” staff for software enhancement and support. FWP is in the second round of recruitment toward this end. Having the right individuals involved in this very important function is a high priority, so we are exercising special care within this process.

How might the Legislative Finance Committee assist?

At the present time, FWP feels the transition is well in hand, and no additional assistance is required.

FWP appreciates the support of the legislature on this initiative and the opportunity to communicate progress. Please contact me with any further requests for information that might help with the Committee’s understanding

Sincerely,

M. Jeff Hagener
Director

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